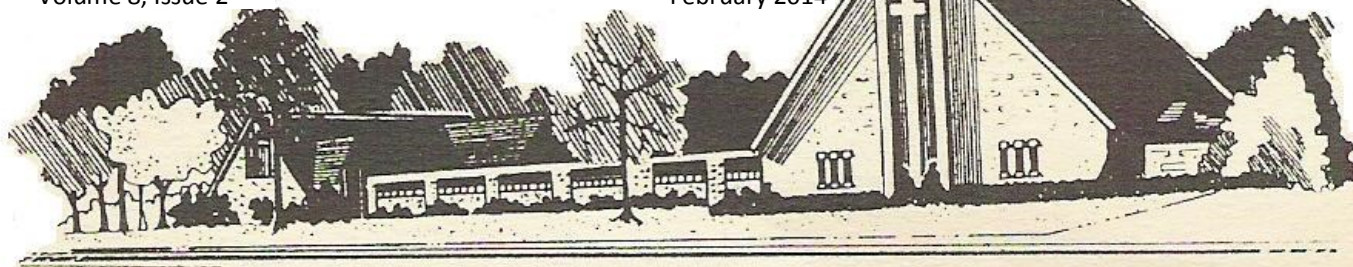


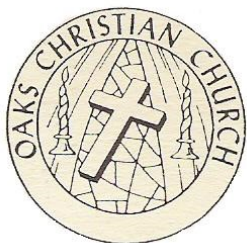
OAKS NOTES

Volume 8, Issue 2

February 2014



Oaks Christian Church is a family church that loves to share God's word, God's Love, and God's fellowship with the world. We are a church in the near inner loop that strives to be a helpful part of the community. We are about Deep Christian spirituality, a true community and a passion for Justice. We celebrate communion every Sunday service and all who believe are welcome to receive.



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A Note from Pastor Don



Note from Pastor Don

It wasn't too long ago that I went to visit one of our people in the hospital. After our visit, I left the room, walked to the elevator, and punched the button to go down.

As I stood waiting outside the elevator, all of a sudden, there was a rush! This little old lady with a cane came scuffling toward the closing doors of the elevator like her life depended on it. Then, she stuck her cane in the closing doors so they would open back up, but they didn't... actually, the doors just pinned her cane between them.

Panicked, she quickly pulled her cane back out. But she wasn't finished yet. She then used her cane to poke and prod at the doors, still determined to open them back up.

At first, I thought maybe I had missed the elevator as well after being so distracted by this woman. But when I took a look at the flashing numbers above the elevator doors, I realized the elevator was making a trip up, not a trip down.

I turned to the woman and said, "You do know it's going up, right?" At which point the woman put her cane down and took a few steps back. A minute later, when the elevator returned and opened its

doors, she stepped quickly inside it and rode the elevator "down" with me without ever saying a word.

And this is the way it is in life, as well. We're rushing through in such a hurry! And we're willing to do whatever it takes to get in those doors we "think" we need to go through.

But so often, we realize the door we rushed through has taken us in the wrong direction. And the sad thing is, God has already told us what's going up and what's going down... we just need to take the time to look and listen to what he's trying to tell us. Because if we don't, many of us will fight tooth and nail to take a trip that's taking us somewhere we really don't want to go!

Jesus came to show us "The Way." Let's quit rushing around and trying to force doors open. Let's wait for the doors to open that He opens for us. Now we may have to wait a little longer for those doors to open, but if He is going to open them for us, we know they are going to lead us in the right direction.

See ya Sunday!

In His Grip,
Pastor Don



AN EVERLASTING LOVE

To Celebrate Valentine's Day, The Murrays Share Their Story

Hitchin' a Ride

It was December 1951, and Billie Lauderdale was standing outside the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company with her best friend, Wilma Murray, who was waiting for a ride home from work.

This was to be a special ride, because it was coming from Wilma's brother, Don Murray, who had been serving in the Korean War for the last year. Wilma and Don grew up in different households after their parent's divorce, so Wilma wrote Don before the holidays, asking him to come visit during his trip home in December.

Wilma was glad to see him, because she missed him, but she also had some plans in mind for her brother and her best friend.

"She was going to try and set (Billie) up on a date with me," Don said. "And according to what I hear, (Billie) wasn't going to have anything to do with it."

When Don pulled up in front of Southwestern Bell, Wilma said her goodbyes to Billie, and got in the car with Don. But Don wasn't ready to leave yet.

"I said, 'Who's your friend?'" Don said, recalling that day.

After Wilma explained her best friend to him, Don said he would take Billie home, too.

Billie, who usually rode the bus after work, got in the car, and Don drove her back to her house. As Billie was walking up the steps to her front door, Don made a surprising statement.

"I told my sister, 'I'm going to marry her,'" Don said. "And my sister just hoo-hawed. She thought that was hilarious."

But now, it's Don and Billie laughing at that story. Billie, who wasn't going to have "any part" of being set up with Don, has now been standing by his side as his wife for 61 years.

The two have been members of the church for almost as long, providing a great example of a Godly marriage. In the spirit of Valentine's Day, they shared their love story with us.

Love and Marriage

It wasn't long after that fateful ride home that Don and Billie had their first date – an outing to the movies.

However, the rest of the couple's dating time was limited. Don had to go back to Korea for another year of service, or for a "Truman Year," as he called it, because President Harry Truman unexpectedly extended the time for the troops.

Don and Billie kept in contact during that period, making phone calls and writing letters.

After the first six months, though, Don received his discharge. The Army encouraged him to re-enlist, but Don decided he had opportunities he wanted to pursue elsewhere, or more specifically, he wanted to pursue a certain woman in Joplin, MO.



DON AND BILLIE MURRAY stand at the wedding altar at South Joplin Christian Church in Joplin, MO, on September 13, 1952.

"I got discharged in June – June 25," Don said. "I'll never forget that day. Best thing that happened."

It was the "best thing," because when he returned back home, he and Billie began to see a lot more of each other, and Don fell in love with her.

He admits he fell in love with her entire family, too.

"I came from a dysfunctional family," Don said, "And I walked in their house, and there's her mother, standing with her arms out to welcome me. I've never been welcomed like that in a house before."

Billie began to feel the same love for Don, though when she looks back, she can't pinpoint what it was that did it.

"I really don't know what attracted me to him," Billie said.

But before Billie could finish her sentence, Don answered for her.

"It's because she wasn't going to date me," he said with a laugh. "That's what it was."

One night, Don was taking Billie home, just as he had done months earlier when they first met. Except this time, he wanted to make it a special occasion.

"I said, 'By the way, I've got something in the glove compartment for you,'" Don said.

It was a ring, and Don said Billie took off running to show her family.

at the church.

"Her brother was quite a smoker, and we were standing out on the back porch of the church, smoking a cigarette," Don said. "They were looking for us, and we didn't know."

Once the groom was found, the ceremony began, and Don and Billie were married.

That was on a Saturday, and by Monday, the two were back at work. Billie continued to work at Southwestern Bell for six more months, then became a housewife.

Don worked at Western Electric, which was an associate of AT&T. He installed telephone equipment, and his job often required him to travel.

That didn't take Don away from Billie, though. She traveled with him. The two bought a trailer house and traveled through Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Illinois, and Arkansas.

Even when the couple had children, two boys and one girl, they traveled together as a family. However, once the kids were old enough to start school, Billie stayed home with them while Don traveled.

Then, in 1964, Don's company notified him he would be transferred to Houston. Don said he didn't know much about Houston at that time, except what his boss had told him – that Houston was on the Gulf Coast, and it always rained.

Wedding Bells and Work Whistles

Don and Billie planned their wedding for September 13. Don was 21 years old, and Billie 20.

On that day, Billie wore a beige dress suit with dark brown pumps, and a birdcage veil atop her head. When the ceremony was about to begin, everything was in place, except for one minor thing.

Don was missing.

"I thought he'd ran off," Billie said.

But, to everyone's relief, Don wasn't far. Actually, he was right



CUTTING THE CAKE: Don and Billie Murray enjoy a traditional moment at their wedding reception on September 13, 1952. The couple would cut a cake again for their 50th Anniversary Party.

And in March, when their family packed up and left Tulsa, OK, his boss was proven right.

"It rained on us the whole way," Don said. "I had two weeks to try and locate and find a home. That whole two weeks, every day, it poured down rain."

The rain sometimes made for unhappy house hunting. The couple found water roaches in several of the houses – too many for Billie.

"No, I'm not going to move my kids into something like this," Billie recalls thinking.

So, the family ended up finding an apartment instead. Even so, Don doesn't regret the decision to move to Houston.

"It's the best move that we ever made," Don said, "because we've been here since 1964. It's home."

Home Sweet Houston

When Don and Billie found a permanent home in Houston, they began looking for a permanent church, too, and eventually landed on Oaks Christian Church.

Billie said she liked Oaks because it put an emphasis on something she found to be very important.

"It's just family oriented," Billie said. "I just liked the way that it felt – the family. And family is part of your religion."

As for Don and Billie's own family – their kids were growing. Don said he loved the years of waking up on Saturday morning, lying in bed, and listening to the cartoons on the TV the children were watching.

"That's back when they played good music as the background," Don said, "and I loved listening to that music."

Their family also enjoyed playing games together, including War, Spades, and Dominoes.

Although the years passed and their three children grew up, the games never left. The youngest of their three grandsons, a 10-year old, loves playing games, too.

"So we play games with him now," Billie said.



SHARING A LAUGH in 2010. The couple will celebrate their 62nd Anniversary this September.

Advice for the Ages

In 2002, Don and Billie celebrated their 50th Anniversary with their friends and family at Oaks Christian Church. It included a beautiful tiered white cake, made by Billie's sister-in-law.

Ten years later, they celebrated their 60th Anniversary, but that time, they just spent a "nice quiet evening" at home. They think another party might be in order for the 65th, but until then, they are just as pleased to be spending their 61st year together.

Don said he used to believe a good marriage was the result of each spouse giving 50/50, but now, he thinks differently.

"Each side should give one hundred percent," Don said. "You have to be willing to give all to make a marriage work."

For example, Don said he never made any major decisions without Billie, and vice versa.

Billie said she realizes they aren't perfect; they haven't always given 100 percent. But she knows that in a marriage, a husband and wife have to at least be open to give and open to talk to each other.

And when her and Don do talk, Billie said she knows they won't always agree, and that's OK. That acceptance has saved them from fighting throughout their marriage.

"We feel like we're two different people, and we have a right to have our own opinion," Billie said, "but we don't argue about it."

If there's one opinion they do share, though, it's that their life together has been a blissful one. For Don, the key to happiness is simple.

"There's nothing to fight about," Don said. "Everything is beautiful. This has been a glorious time."

And Billie couldn't agree more.

"I'd do it again," she said with a smile at Don, and she gave her husband's knee a soft pat.

February 2014

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|------------------------------|---|--|----------|--|---|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 Sunday School @ 9:30 am; Worship @ 10:45 am; | 3 | 4 CWF @ 10 am; Bible Study @ 6:15 pm; Girls Scouts @ 6:30 pm | 5 Handbells @ 6 pm; Choir Practice @ 7 pm | 6 | 7 Boy Scouts @ 7:30 pm; Renovada Bible Study @ 7:30 pm | 8 |
| 9 Sunday School @ 9:30 am; Worship @ 10:45 am; Boy Scout Sunday; Board Meeting | 10 | 11 Prayer Circle @ 9:30 am; CWF @ 10 am; Bible Study @ 6:15 pm; Girl Scouts @ 6:30 pm | 12 Handbells @ 6 pm; Choir Practice @ 7 pm | 13 | 14 Boy Scouts @ 7:30 pm; Renovada Bible Study @ 7:30 pm | 15 |
| 16 School @ 9:30 am; Worship @ 10:45 am; Megan Poling Baptism; Chili Cook-Off; Dialysis Support Group Mtg. @ 2 pm | 17 President's Day | 18 CWF @ 10 am; Bible Study @ 6:15 pm; Girls Scouts @ 6:30 pm | 19 Handbells @ 6 pm; Choir Practice @ 7 pm | 20 | 21 Boy Scouts @ 7:30 pm; Renovada Bible Study @ 7:30 pm | 22 CMF Breakfast @ 8 am; Free Community Lunch @ 12-2 pm |
| 23 Sunday School @ 9:30 am; Worship @ 10:45 am; | 24 | 25 CWF @ 10 am; Bible Study @ 6:15 pm; Girls Scouts @ 6:30 pm | 26 Handbells @ 6 pm; Choir Practice @ 7 pm | 27 | 28 Boy Scouts @ 7:30 pm; Renovada Bible Study @ 7:30 pm | |

Happy February Birthdays

2/9 Megan Poling
2/10 Gloria Slocum
2/14 Kathy O'Dell
2/22 George Hajovsky
& Pat Whitley
2/28 Frankie Duplechaine

Happy Anniversary!

2/2 Dorene Drake and Ernest Knipp
2/24 Charles and Gloria Slocum



LET US KNOW!

If there are events, meetings, or stories you would like to see in the March newsletter, please let us know!

E-mail the church secretary, Holly Leger, at oakscchouston@aol.com. Please send in all information before

Thursday, February 20, 2014!

From the Treasurer - Dorene Drake

| Operating Account '13 | 2013 OCTOBER | 2013 NOVEMBER | 2013 DECEMBER |
|-----------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Deposits | \$8,664.53 | \$8,816.20 | \$9,597.30 |
| Disbursements | \$10,876.10 | \$9,175.29 | \$9,396.12 |
| Difference | \$(2,211.57) | \$(369.09) | \$201.18 |

Oaks Christian Church

Disciples of Christ

1216 Bethlehem

Houston, TX 77018-1918

Phone: 713-688-7761

Fax: 713-688-5100



WE SPOTTED YOU AT THE OAKS!

